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Borough of Great Torrington

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

and the

Borough Surveyor and Public Health Inspector

For the Year ending
31st December, 1962

Public Health Staff.

Medical Officer of Health:

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Glen Tor, Villa Road, Torrington.

Telephone 3222.

Public Health Inspector and Borough Surveyor:

P. F. R. E. SYMONS, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

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Telephone 2164.

Committees:

HOUSING, SANITARY, BUILDING and IMPROVEMENTS, SPECIAL SEWERAGE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Council Offices,
6, Halsdon Terrace,
Great Torrington.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

We have pleasure in presenting our report for the year ending 31st December, 1962.

During the year the general health of the Borough was very good. There was a mild epidemic of influenza in January: in May-June there was an outbreak of measles, confined almost entirely to the junior school children.

The corrected birth rate was 15.3 per 1,000 population: that for the whole of England and Wales was 18.0.

The corrected death rate was 14.1 per 1,000 population: the figure for the whole of the country was 11.9.

We are,
Yours faithfully,

C. F. R. BRIGGS,
Medical Officer of Health.

P. F. R. E. SYMONS,
Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

Borough of Great Torrington
1962

CHIEF INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS.

Agriculture.	Cattle Breeding Centre.
Glove Making.	Milk Factory.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (Statute acres)	3,592
Mid-year population (estimated)	2,880
Number of Inhabited Houses	992
Rateable Value	£38,175
Product of Penny Rate	£149 19s. 10d.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	17	20	37
Illegitimate	1	1	2

Comparability factor for births—1.13

		England & Wales
Corrected birth rate per 1,000 population	15.3	18.0

The birth rate for 1962 for the whole of England and Wales was the highest since 1947.

Still Births

There were no still births in the Borough

The still birth rate for the whole of England and Wales was 18.1 per 1000 total live and still births.

The total number of births which took place within the Borough was 23. The maternity section of the Cottage Hospital was closed during the whole of the year.

	Male	Female	Total
Deaths	25	34	59

Comparability factor for deaths—0.69

		England & Wales
Corrected death rate per 1000 population	14.1	11.9

Infant Mortality	Male	Female	Total
Deaths of infants under 1 year	—	1	1

		England & Wales
Rate per 1,000 live births	25.6	21.4

The infant mortality rate for England and Wales was the lowest ever recorded.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Neo-natal Mortality

There were no deaths of infants under 4 weeks of age.

Maternal Mortality

There were no deaths from maternal causes (including abortion).

The maternal mortality rate in England and Wales was 0.35 per 1,000 total live and still births.

Causes of Death

	Male	Female
Coronary disease, angina	7	3
Other heart disease	3	5
Vascular disease of nervous system	4	9
Other disease of circulatory system	—	3
Cancer of stomach	1	1
Cancer of lung and bronchus	2	—
Cancer of breast	—	1
Cancer of uterus	—	1
Cancer, other	1	3
Diabetes	—	1
Pneumonia	1	2
Bronchitis	4	2
Duodenal ulcer	1	—
Other disease	—	2
Accidents, not involving motor vehicles	1	1

Death Rates from Cancer

The death rates (per million population) for the year 1962 were as follows :-

		England & Wales
Cancer of lung and bronchus	694	510
Other cancer	2,778	1,667

Age at Death Table

Age at Death	Male	Female
Under 1 year	—	1
1—4	1	—
5—14	—	—
15—24	—	—
25—34	—	—
35—44	—	—
45—54	2	—
55—64	5	4
65—74	8	4
75—84	7	14
85 and over	2	11
Average age at death	67	78

Hazards to Health of Smoking

The attention of the public has been called to the hazards to health of smoking, by posters exhibited in doctors' surgeries and in public places in the town.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There was a mild epidemic of influenza in January: there were no deaths. There was an epidemic of measles, chiefly confined to the junior school-children, during the months of June and July.

In the early months of the year there were outbreaks of smallpox in various parts of the country. Several hundred people in Torrington applied for, and received, vaccination against the disease.

The following cases of infectious disease were notified :—

Measles	40
Pneumonia	10
Food poisoning	4
Dysentery	3
Scarlet fever	2
Erysipelas	1
Pulmonary tuberculosis	1
Ophthalmia neonatorum	1
Puerperal pyrexia	1

Poliomyelitis

Oral vaccine against poliomyelitis became freely available in the early part of the year. The number of cases of poliomyelitis in England and Wales was lower in 1962 than it has been for over half a century. There has been no case in Torrington for many years.

Tuberculosis

One new case of pulmonary tuberculosis was notified during the year. The following cases were on the register at the end of the year:—

	Male	Female
Pulmonary	5	4
Non-pulmonary	3	—

Venereal Disease

No new case has come to our notice. There are facilities for clinic treatment in Barnstaple.

CARE OF EXPECTANT MOTHERS.

Ante-natal care is given to expectant mothers by their own doctors and by the District Nurse/Midwife. Mothercraft classes are held fortnightly by the District Nurse/Midwife and the Health Visitor.

DOMICILIARY MIDWIFERY SERVICE AND HOME NURSING.

The Queen's Institute District Nurse/Midwife is resident in Torrington. She has all modern equipment for Midwifery as well as for general home nursing. There were 23 domiciliary confinements in the Borough during the year.

HEALTH SERVICES AND CARE OF YOUNG CHILDREN.

All mothers are visited in their homes, after confinement, by the County Health Visitor. She supervises the Child Welfare Clinic; this is held fortnightly, for children up to the age of five years.

Infant foods and vitamin supplements can be purchased at reduced prices.

DOMESTIC HELP SERVICE.

Home helps can be provided during confinements and in times of illness. In cases of necessity County grants towards their cost can be made.

CHIROPODY SERVICE.

The County chiropody clinic is held once monthly at the Church House. A small charge is made for treatment.

AMBULANCE SERVICE.

The County ambulance is maintained by Heard's Garage, Torrington, and is operated by the British Red Cross Society. This has been very satisfactory.

Patients carried during 1962	526
Total mileage	12,736

TORRINGTON COTTAGE HOSPITAL

Patients admitted during 1962	148
New out patients	380
Total out-patient attendances	719

NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE.

Seventy one persons gave blood when the South Western Division of the National Blood Transfusion Service visited Torrington in October. Some of these volunteers had already given blood in Bideford earlier in the year.

SALE OF ICE CREAM.

No ice cream is manufactured in the Borough. Only pre-packed ice cream is sold, and the shops retailing it are all registered.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 to 1959. Part I of the Act.

1—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Number of: Inspections (4)	Number of: Written notices (5)	Number of: Occupiers prosecuted (6)	M/c line No. (7)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	1	3	3	—	—	1
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	2	19	6	—	—	2
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	3	—	—	—	—	3
TOTAL		22	9	NIL	NIL	

2—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number of cases in which defects were found: Found (3)	Remedied (4)	Referred: To H.M. Inspector (5)	Referred: By H.M. Inspector (6)	Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (7)	M/c line No. (8)

Overcrowding (S.2)	5						5
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)...	6						6
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	7						7
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	8						8
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)							
(*a*) Insufficient	9						9
(*b*) Unsuitable or defective	10						10
(*c*) Not separate for sexes	11						11
Other offences (not including offences relating to Homework)	12						12
TOTAL		NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	

OUTWORK—(Sections 110 and 111). Part VIII of the Act.

Nature of Work	M/c line No.	Section 133			Section 134			M/c line No.
		No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Wearing apparel, Making, etc.	13	233	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	13

RAINFALL.

Details of rainfall during recent years are as follows :—

	1962	1961	1960	1959
January ...	6.50	6.03	4.03	5.41
February ...	1.37	3.22	3.46	0.23
March ...	2.92	0.40	2.14	3.63
April ...	2.95	4.18	3.10	2.86
May ...	2.01	1.18	1.60	1.32
June ...	0.48	0.76	1.25	1.40
July ...	1.64	2.92	5.77	3.08
August ...	3 08	3.54	4.63	1.01
September ...	3.11	3.83	5.35	0.31
October ...	1.19	7.65	7.54	5.84
November ...	2.50	2.82	7.42	9.30
December ...	2.32	4.11	6.93	8.79
Total ...	30.07	40.64	53.22	43.18

The figures for rainfall are recorded daily at the Sewage Disposal Works by the attendant.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The sewage pumping stations and disposal plant have worked satisfactorily throughout the year. Any faults have been of a minor nature and have generally been normal maintenance matters.

The enlargement of the sewage disposal works has not commenced but all details of the contract have been agreed and work will start in the Spring of 1963.

Despite the continued overloading of the works the effluent discharged has been of a very high standard.

Arrangements have been made for the removal of sludge in liquid form. This has obviated the difficulty experienced with sludge drying and the smell which was created when the sludge was shovelled from the drying beds.

WATER SUPPLY.

Water is supplied to the Borough by the North Devon Water Board.

The supply has always been adequate and the quality very good.

The water is slightly alkaline and is not plumbo-solvent.

HOUSING.

A block of six flats for elderly people has been erected in Calf Street. The flats were occupied in May and the tenants are very satisfied with the accommodation. One-bedroomed units such as these would seem to be ideal for those elderly people capable of looking after themselves.

The Council hope to erect ten more flats of a somewhat similar plan in New Street. At present delay is being experienced in obtaining the site.

Preliminary discussions have taken place with representatives of the County Council with a view to providing self-contained bed/sitting room flats within the grounds of the Torridge View Welfare Home. This accommodation would meet the needs of those elderly people who can generally look after themselves but may need communal cooking and dining facilities. In times of illness the tenants of these flats could be cared for by the staff of the Welfare Home.

The Council has acquired the site of 2.35 acres in Mill Street and negotiations are in hand for the submission of preliminary lay-outs. It is hoped that it will be possible to erect some 26-30 flats and houses on this site.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS.

The joint rodent control scheme operated by the Borough Council and the Torrington R.D.C. continues to work satisfactorily. Routine visits, inspections and treatments are made regularly throughout the area and infestation is kept at a very low level.

Very few complaints are received and these are dealt with very quickly.

INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Slaughtering has been carried out regularly at two private slaughter-houses within the Borough and Tables A and B give details of animals slaughtered, meat condemned, etc.

TABLE A.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

	Cattle excluding Cows	*Cows*	*Calves*	*Sheep and Lambs*	*Pigs*
Number killed	137	2	16	378	483
Number inspected ...	137	2	16	378	483
All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticercosis					
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	1*	1*
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	16	2	—	9	16
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticercosis	11.7	100.	NIL	2.6	3.5
Tuberculosis					
Whole carcases condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	—	—	—	—	1
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	0.2
Cysticercosis					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

* "Emergency slaughter" or "Casualty" cases.

TABLE B.

Summary of Meat condemned with cause and weight.

	Part or Organ Condemned	*Cause*	*Weight in lbs.*
Cattle excluding Cows	12 part livers	Cirrhosis	41 lbs.
	2 whole and 1 part liver	Abscesses	22 lbs.
	1 set of lungs	Pleurisy	9 lbs.
	1 head	Cysticercosis	26 lbs.
Cows	1 part liver	Cirrhosis	5 lbs.
	1 part liver	Abscess	4 lbs.
Sheep and Lambs	*1 complete ewe's carcase and offal	Fevered and badly bled	61 lbs.
	*2 pieces of loin	Injuries	5 lbs.
	2 whole and 5 part livers	Distomatosis	10 lbs.
Pigs	*1 complete piglet's carcase and offal	Fevered and badly bled, liver cystic	60 lbs.
	*1 piglet's liver	Cysts	1 lb.
	*1 hind leg	Arthritis and Abscess	14 lbs.
	9 whole and 1 part liver	Cysts	29 lbs
	1 set of lungs	Pleurisy	3 lbs.
	1 set of lungs	Worms	2 lbs.
	1 head	Tuberculosis	11 lbs.
	1 kidney	Retention Cysts	½ lb.

* *"Emergency Slaughter" or "Casualty" cases.*

TABLE C.

Details of other foodstuffs condemned during the year.

Food	*Reason for Condemnation*	*Weight*
5 Tins Cured Pork Shoulder	Tins blown, meat putrefactive	52lbs. 8ozs.
3 Tins Pork Picnic Shoulder	,, ,, ,, ,,	31lbs. 5ozs.
1 Tin Corned Beef	Tin blown, meat putrefactive	6lbs.

SUMMARY OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS MADE DURING THE YEAR.

Allotments and Fields	45
Byelaw and Planning Matters	64
Cattle and Pannier Markets	121
Cemetery and Churchyard	87
Drain Testing and Inspecting	25
Factories	9
Food Premises and Food Inspection	9
Housing	256
Improvement Grants	127
Meat Inspection	278
Miscellaneous	58
New Building Work in Progress	56
Nuisances...	26
Petroleum Licensing and Storage	13
Playing Field	15
Public Conveniences	21
Refuse Collection and Disposal	38
Rodent Control	5
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal	252
Street Lighting	21
Water	3
Total	1,529

Copp & Son, Printers, Torrington.

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